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since they were built have almost invariably adopted the twin screw. This fact speaks for itself.

JAMES H. THOMSON,

of the firm of James & George Thomson, builders of the "City of Paris," "City of New York," etc.

II.

GAMBLING ON OCEAN STEAMERS.

AMONG the better class of travellers who yearly cross the ocean, the question has repeatedly arisen, and very naturally too, Why is it that gambling is so openly allowed and so openly encouraged, as it unquestionably is, by the steamship companies in the smoking-rooms of the first-class Atlantic steamers?

It is a well-known fact, at least among all the officers connected with the ships, that during the travelling season—from May to November—the Atlantic steamers are the resorts of professional gamblers from all parts of the United States, whose sole object in crossing the ocean is to come in contact with men whom under no other conditions or circumstances they would ever be likely to meet. In dress and appearance they so closely resemble gentlemen of refinement that their unsuspecting fellow-passengers are quickly and easily deceived.

On one of my summer voyages from New York there came on board the "Germanic" two men from the West or South—Texas, I believe. For a few days they lounged about in the smoking-room, now watching one table of players, then strolling to another, appearing to watch the games more for the lack of something better to do than because they really took an interest in them. Several invitations were extended to them to take a hand, but they invariably declined, making some remark about "want of practice" or "ignorance of the game."

On the fourth day out the younger of the two appeared to rouse himself from his listlessness and apparent indifference, declaring that he "didn't mind if he tried his luck." He played and lost; played and lost again. His companion made no comments, but waited and watched silently. On the day following the game was renewed, the second then agreeing to play. They swept everything before them.

During the first four days both had been keenly studying the play of all who were gambling at the different tables, and had laid their plans accordingly. When these were perfected, the men were ready for action. How many hundreds of dollars went into their pockets I was unable to learn; but the stakes were high, and it was no inconsiderable amount which they carried away with them when leaving the ship at Liverpool.

A young man, a graduate of one of the Western colleges, came on board alone in New York for the purpose of crossing the ocean to join his parents in London. Just before leaving the city, after purchasing his ticket for the steamer, he drew from his father's banker £100 in English money, more than sufficient, of course, to defray all incidental expenses. Not more than twenty-four hours had elapsed when I was informed that the young fellow was playing poker in the smoking-room with men whose reputation as professional card-players was well established on board the "Germanic." I knew his father well, and my first impulse was to send for the young man and expostulate with him. But when I considered that I had no authority to prevent gambling, I concluded that it was better for me to remain silent, and I did so. According to the established rule of the fraternity when an inexperienced player falls into their hands, they allowed the lad—for he was little more than that—to win the first two or three games. This so elated him that he became reckless and increased the stakes. Then the tables were turned, and the men literally robbed him of every penny that he had in his possession. In order to reach London it was necessary for him to borrow a sufficient sum to pay his expenses. He was fortunate enough to find a gentleman among the passengers who was willing to advance him the amount required.

I could cite hundreds of such cases were it requisite to do so. These two illustrations, however, are sufficient to enlighten the uninitiated as to the prevailing influences that exist in the smoking-rooms of the first-class ocean steamers.

According to the advertisements issued by the steamship companies, the smoking-room is intended for the comfort and convenience of all male passengers who wish to enjoy a pipe or cigar while crossing the ocean. Smoking in any other part of the ship, except on deck in the open air, is strictly prohibited, and rightly, too. This room, therefore, is the only place where in rainy or windy weather a passenger can with any satisfaction indulge in a smoke.

Again and again have I known circumstances like the following to occur. A gentleman of refined tastes, perhaps a clergyman, wishing to enjoy a cigar and at the same time occupy himself in reading, goes into the smoking-room. The tables are occupied by card-players, most of them gamblers. Not desiring to come in contact with this class of men, he takes a seat as remote from them as possible, opens his book, and endeavors to concentrate his thoughts on the subject before him. He is scarcely seated when low mutterings proceed from one of the players, who is evidently not on the winning side. He pays no attention to them beyond making an effort not to hear. Voices rise higher and higher. Coarse, vulgar, abusive language, mingled with oaths, is shouted across the room. Rising from his seat, the thoroughly disgusted traveller thrusts into his pocket the book he has been attempting to read, throws away his cigar, and rushes indignantly on deck, wondering why it is that the smoking-room is allowed to be monopolized by the lowest class of men that cross the Atlantic, and that no accommodation whatever is furnished for passengers of different tastes and habits.

One of my old passengers came to me on a certain voyage, when there happened to be an unusually large number of gamblers on board, and I saw that he was laboring under great excitement. "Captain," said he, "it is disgraceful, outrageous, that these men should be permitted to take full possession of the smoking-room, and force those who have some self-respect out on deck. Can't you do something? Can't you prevent it?" The only satisfaction that I could give him was that I could do nothing whatever, as no authority had been given me; gambling not being prohibited by the company. I added, however, that if a complaint were entered at the office in Liverpool, some benefit might result from it. I have reason to suppose that this was done, as, a voyage or two later, a small placard was put up in the smoking-room bearing words to this effect: "Gentlemen are respectfully requested not to play for high stakes." The "gentlemen" to whom this notice was addressed, if they saw it at all, laughed, shrugged their shoulders, and played for what stakes best suited them.

One form of gambling on the large steamers is betting on the number of miles made by the ship every twenty-four hours. The excitement attending it is beyond description. Now that the competition between the "Teutonic," of the White Star Line, and the "City of Paris" and the "City of New York," of the Inman Line, is so great, it is well known that many of the passengers who have large sums at stake find it wholly impossible to sleep at night owing to the intense strain upon their nervous system.

Passengers crossing on board my ship have resorted to every device for obtaining some information regarding the number of miles run. In the most persuasive and insinuating manner bribes have been offered to the officers and men, and every inducement has been held out to them for giving a "tip." Whether or not this has ever been obtained I am unable to say. So averse have I been to this detestable trickery that I have never permitted any gentleman who made a practice of betting on the runs to enter my chart-room.

An incident occurred on one of my voyages which served to strengthen this resolution on my part, and I never deviated from it. An Englishman, who had come on board bearing a letter of introduction to me from one of the managers of the White Star Line, was in the habit of coming to me every morning after breakfast, as I stood smoking my pipe by the wheel-house door, and having a few moments' chat on various subjects; the speed of the ship not being one of them. That he was betting heavily on the runs was a fact of which I was in total ignorance. By a strange coincidence, for three successive days he was the winner of the pool. A syndicate had been formed, and had bought up what it was believed would be the winning num-

bers. The disappointed holders became furious in their indignation and anger. Discussing the affair in the smoking-room, one of the party insinuated that the fortunate individual had received the "tip" from the captain, and threatened "to make it hot" for me.

For several days I remained entirely unconscious of the excitement existing among the betting men. A gentleman who had crossed with me a number of times then kindly informed me what had taken place, and said that he feared there would be trouble. Wishing to have a public interview with the persons who were going to "make it hot" for me, I kept the runs back for two days, and the passengers in complete ignorance of the distance made by the ship. The result fully equalled my anticipations. After luncheon on the second day a number of the gentlemen came to me, wishing to know the cause of such an extraordinary movement on my part. I replied that I would meet all interested in the affair at three o'clock in the smoking-room. I was punctual to the moment, and found, as I expected, the room filled with passengers. I demanded that a thorough investigation should at once be made, and the result was that, when the matter was sifted to its foundation, it turned out that the men who had made the accusation and caused the disturbance were a party of professional gamblers from Chicago.

Why is the gambling permitted? The question is one that with a moment's consideration can be easily answered. All Atlantic passenger steamers are furnished with a large supply of wines and liquors, which are not included in the price of passage. Men who gamble drink; and largely, too. The profits derived from the sale of these wines and liquors during the travelling—or, I may say, the gambling—season are so great that it is not to the interest of the steamship companies to abolish gambling, or to interfere in any way with the comfort and enjoyment of a class of passengers who so materially add to their income.

CHAS. WM. KENNEDY,
late commander White Star steamer "Germanic."

III.

THE SINGLE VOTE IN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS.

BILLS have been presented in both houses of Congress purporting to regulate the apportionment of Congress districts by the States. These bills, however, are intended not to eradicate the evil of unequal representation, but, rather, to strengthen its hold upon the political system. They are merely partisan devices, invented for the purpose of enabling the political party in control of the legislatures of the more populous States to perpetuate the advantage it has seized. They are based upon the provision of the Federal Constitution (Article I., section 4) in which it is declared that "the times, places, and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives shall be prescribed in each State by the legislature thereof; but the Congress may, at any time, by law, make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing Senators." Whether this clause of the Federal Constitution justifies the action of Congress proposed in these bills is a question about which constitutional lawyers differ. It is, indeed, exceedingly doubtful if Congress can constitutionally exercise any such power as that which it would assume in the passage of these bills. But granting, for the sake of the argument, that Congress can exercise such power within the limitations of the Constitution, it is quite clear that it cannot improve the "manner" of electing Representatives by prohibiting the repeal of "gerrymandered" apportionments, or by permitting the State legislatures to make some Congress districts with a population smaller by 15,000 than that allotted to others, as is proposed by what is known as the McComas Bill. If Congress is to "make or alter" the State "regulations" for the election of Representatives to any good purpose, it can do much better by abstaining altogether from any intermeddling in the formation of Congress districts, and simply prescribing that the people of the several States may vote for Representatives without regard to any attempt on the